

# INFOCUS



WINTER 2011



416.746.5772

[www.jcassoc.org](http://www.jcassoc.org)

[info@jcassoc.org](mailto:info@jcassoc.org)

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As we celebrate Black History month we acknowledge the contributions and the accomplishments of people of colour. We not only celebrate and pay homage to those that have come before us but also recognize the everyday heroes among us. This year at our annual Boonoonoonos Brunch we paid tribute to Deputy Chief Keith Forde (Retired), the first person of colour to hold a command position in the police force in Canada. We recognized Retired Deputy Chief Keith Forde for his brave stance against the injustices in the police service. He didn't shy away from acknowledging the flaws in the system and encouraged open and honest dialogue.

This was fitting in terms of past Boonoonoonos themes. One year we celebrated our unsung hero; our youth. The media would have us believe that our black children are gangsters that are beyond redemption. That year we were exposed to the brightest of the bright, young professionals, brilliant students and even those who initially travelled the wrong path but took the initiative to turn their lives around. When President Obama was elected we celebrated the year of the men, again those who exemplified the characteristics that make us who we are, strength of character, commitment, loyalty.

Last year we shone the light on the founders and foundation members of the Jamaican Canadian Association (JCA). These individuals had the fortitude over 48 years ago to create this Association. It's on their shoulders we boldly stand.

The Jamaican Canadian Association has earned its place in Canadian history as one of the oldest community organizations in Canada. The longevity of this Association can be directly attributed to the commitment and the hard work of its members. I am proud to be a part of this Association and its long history of community service.



Warmest regards,  
*Audrey Campbell*

## CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S MESSAGE

February is celebrated as Black History Month in Canada. This year's celebrations will reflect the decision by the United Nations to declare 2011 as the International Year for People of African Descent. The JCA will have its annual Black History Month event on February 24<sup>th</sup> to recognize the challenges and celebrate the achievements of those who have left a mark on history and society.

In December 2010 several immigrant service agencies in the GTA received news from Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) that their funding will not be renewed in 2011. This sent shock waves deep and wide in communities across the city as some agencies have more than 70% CIC funding and will face possible closure. The majority of the defunded organizations are ethno-cultural agencies serving specific ethnic communities. The loss of settlement funding to these agencies will result in service gaps in the various communities. The JCA has responded to partner agencies affected by offering moral support to get through this difficult period. The JCA partnered with Scadding Court Community Center, to be part of a 22 week pilot project spear headed by the City of Toronto called Toronto Newcomer Initiative. This city program will combine system-wide changes in the delivery of city services with direct settlement delivery. One of our settlement counsellors is now on secondment to this initiative.

The United Way Toronto has recently released research done on poverty in Toronto, entitled "Vertical Poverty." The research focused on poverty in high-rise buildings within neighbourhoods. Some of the key findings were, 40% of all families in high-rise buildings in the City of Toronto were 'poor' in 2006 compared to 25% in 1981 and Scarborough has experienced a ten-fold increase in high-poverty neighbourhoods from 4 to 40 over the same period of time. Over the past Summer violent crimes has increased in the Jane and Finch area. In January Police Chief, Bill Blair and Police 31 division hosted a forum entitled "Reducing violence: a community conversation" to address the issue. The JCA staff participated in this forum.

The renovation of the reception and employment services area is slated to be completed this month. Upon completion we will have a an employment services area that will be accessible to disabled clients and staff, meets the Ontario fire code requirements and have modern state of the arts furniture and equipment to meets clients needs.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our dedicated and hard working staff and our committed Board members, volunteers and membership. Last but not least, St. Valentines Day is also celebrated in the month of February so "ONE LOVE" to you all.



Respectfully,  
*Michael A Foster*

## MEMBERSHIP CORNER

**Just a reminder that all memberships expire on March 31, 2011.**

The committee is continuing to work on putting together a Benefits Package and are looking at businesses to approach to participate in our program. If you have personal contact with any business, please pass on their contact information to the Chair, Pam Reynolds.

### MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT, RENEWAL & OUTREACH

New members who recently joined the Association are: Henry Witcliff, Angela Shallow, Velma Hyde-Tucker.

We now have a total 333 paid up members but we still need your assistance to increase our numbers; our goal is to have 500 members by the end of the next fiscal year. Our membership drive for the coming year will be asking each member to sign up a friend or family.

### ILLNESS & BEREAVEMENTS

We continue to send cards to members who become ill or have had illnesses and bereavements in their families.

Bereavement Committee: We are in need of volunteers for the Bereavement Committee for the following areas: Scarborough, Brampton, Toronto, Mississauga. If you are interested please contact the coordinator Dean Parker at 416-746-5772 ext. 249.

### **2011 Monthly Membership Services Committee Meeting Dates:**

Monthly Committee Meetings are held on the first (1<sup>st</sup>) Friday of every month. (except where noted) at 6:30 pm.

For your convenience, please see the following:

Friday, January 7, 2011	Friday, May 5, 2011	Friday, September 2, 2011
Friday, February 4, 2011	Friday, June 4, 2011	Friday, October 7, 2011
Friday, March 4, 2011	Friday, July 8, 2011	Friday, November 4, 2011
Friday, April 1, 2011	August 2011 (No Meeting)	Friday, December 2, 2011

Pam Reynolds,  
Chair, Membership Services Committee

## PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Since the last quarterly meeting, the Public Relations Committee has doubled its efforts to build JCA's presence and involvement within the community. This committee's first media launch occurred on Tuesday November 23, 2010 and the invitees represented radio, television and print media. The event was a success. It was our first step in opening up the lines of communication between JCA and the wider community. The effort was rewarded with feedback from the media personnel who continually support the JCA and are clearly visible at our ongoing events.

We strive to start new relationships, build stronger ties, and maintain existing bonds with main stream and social media networks.

We attended a media workshop specifically designed to assist with the public relations need of the JCA. The workshop was the direct result of the strong partnership between local media personnel and the JCA. We plan to participate in additional forward reaching partnerships that enhance the image of this great organization.

To add to the list of accomplishments, our team has now introduced competitive advertising rates for space on the JCA website and the In Focus newsletter. For additional information regarding rates and space, please email us at [publicrelations@jcaontario.org](mailto:publicrelations@jcaontario.org)

We continue to promote JCA through social media outlets. As a reminder, JCA can be found on [facebook.com/jamaicancanadianassociation](http://facebook.com/jamaicancanadianassociation) and on [twitter@jca\\_ontario](http://twitter@jca_ontario). The new website address is [www.jcaontario.org](http://www.jcaontario.org). To contact the public relations committee, you may do so on line or by calling 416-746-5772 ext 454. We are committed to providing you with a response within a timely manner.

In our continued endeavour to improving our services, the committee is seeking individuals with public relations and or media experience. In the coming months, we look forward to the positive changes that occur as a result of the combined efforts of all committees, membership and the general public in support of JCA. With each positive step forward, we will achieve greatness.

Regards,

Yolan Williams  
Public Relations Chair



### JCA SATURDAY MORNING TUTORIAL PROGRAM

Volunteer Tutors are required to assist Grades 1-9 students in improving their academic standing

Classes are held on Saturdays from 10:00 am – 1:00pm  
at the Jamaican Canadian Centre  
995 Arrow Road

**For further information please contact the JCA at 416 746 5777**

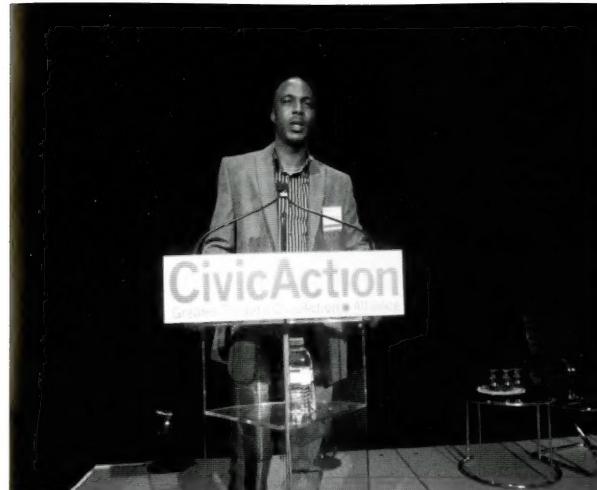


### Be a part of the North York West (JCA) Spelling Bee Planning Committee

We are looking for volunteers to organize the upcoming *North York West Spelling Bee (JCA Chapter)* Competition.

We need a team of individuals who have a passion for helping children between the ages 6-15 years. Bring your experience, knowledge and skills to offer assistance in any of the following areas: Pronouncers, Judges, Resource Person, Word-Keepers and Coaching.

**For more info, please contact The JCA @ 416-746-5772 ext. 242**



I have always heard the saying that life is a journey with various roads. I have come to learn that while one might set out on such journey, he or she will travel paths that had not been intended. I have always felt I belonged in management and without putting much thought into it, I would just assumed I would achieve this long term goal. When I left college, I thought I would have simply glided into my field of Information Technology (I.T) and gathered the needed work experience to propel me to the top of any organization. I thought the people I worked with, perhaps my I.T. team or upper management, would mentor me along the way. My plans were that simple. After two layoff experiences, I consoled myself that being a manager was not meant to be and my reaction was to pack it up and do something else. So where exactly am I now?

I am the owner of Marlebon Consulting; an I.T. company specializing in providing system administration, web maintenance, software training and social media marketing to small and medium size organizations. I guess this would make me management...huh? The subject of my article to celebrate Black History Month is my journey to where I am today and the belief systems that drove me here.

To begin, I believe fate is when all the forces in the universe come together to reward your actions or pursuits. As an individual, you are not sitting and waiting to be struck by the "fate lightning" but you are continuously moving toward a cause even if you are not fully aware. In my heart, I have always felt it was important to give a helping hand. Growing up, I was mentored by a community that helped each other especially in times of disasters such as floods and hurricanes. I have been mentored by a community that was a parent outside of my own parent. I have been also mentored by a community that together can pull off the simple thing as a community fun day in a mighty and uplifting way.

It was only fate or the forces of the universe acting together that caused me to start volunteering. I taught my first I.T. class at 17 years old to adults that were at least twice my age and enjoyed the experience. It was easy for me soon after when a friend asked me to help tutor youth at JCA's Saturday Morning Tutorial Program. This initial experience led me to volunteer on the Board of Directors of JCA. While on the Board, I also volunteered to train the Caribbean seniors to use the computer and surf the Internet. I didn't stop there. I expanded my volunteering outside of the JCA. A fellow colleague on the Board interested me in an environmental project called Green Change in the community of Jane and Finch. This experience led me to further volunteering with the organisation using my expertise to address urgent I.T. issues at the Jane/Finch Community and Family Centre. This was the moment which sparked the launch of Marlebon Consulting.

In October 2009 as a part of the work on the Green Change project and the support of the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW), I, accompanied by two other youth from Jane Finch, joined with one thousand youth in Ottawa who came from all across Canada to deliver the message to parliament hill of greenhouse gas reduction. Our team hosted our own workshop to a room of over twenty participants. While we were there, we heard a great speaker Majora Carter, an environment activist from the South Bronx, whose message connected with us. She spoke about uplifting poor neighbourhoods with environmental actions and jobs. So almost two years after, in this month of February, as if by fate, she accepted our invitation to Jane Finch to bring her message of hope and environmental sustainability to the community.

While here in Toronto, Majora was invited to speak at the Greater Toronto Summit 2011, which was held at the Metro Convention Centre and hosted by the Greater Toronto CivicAction Alliance. What a wonderful honour when I was invited as Chair of the JCA Youth Affairs Committee to introduce this world renowned environmental leader to the room of civic planners, politicians, executives and environmentalist just to name a few.

Wow! I never expected in my wildest dreams to be at this juncture in my career! My plan was very simple - I just wanted to be in management. However volunteering has opened up doors for me that I never thought about and has lead me down a road to fulfilling my own destiny. Is this really my destiny? I will be open minded and embrace new experiences.

## WOMEN'S SPACE

### INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

The first National Woman's Day (NWD) was observed across the United States on February 28, 1909. The very first International Women's Day (IWD), lead by Clara Zetkin was launched on March 19, 1911.

Since 1911, the tenor and character of IWD has changed from being a reminder about the negatives and a celebration of the positives. Women have gained significant ground in many areas of what are traditionally, male dominated program. Young women have equal accesses to post-secondary education to pursue studies in the fields of science, technology or politics. Women can work and have a family. We now have real choices. However, we still have a long way to go before we can celebrate full equality.

Today, a woman is free to pursue higher education, climb the corporate ladder to the corner office - as long as she knows her duty to society. She must think about getting married, settling down and raising a family. When she gives birth, despite thousands of dollars in tuition and years spent on post-secondary studies, she should devote the rest of her life to mothering her children – from home. Her partner should be trusted to pursue the path of accomplishment for them both.

Women who dare to venture into male dominated professions often encounter the debilitation of 'double-standardism'. A woman with purpose and confidence is considered too aggressive; therefore, unfeminine, is usually labelled with degrading monikers. On the other hand, an aggressive man is admired as a man of action and a decision-maker. Female political candidates, for instance, are often criticized, by both men and women, for not 'showing more emotion'. Meaning, I suppose, she should shed a few tears while trying to prove that she's intelligent and dependable enough to hold office. However, male candidates need only the support of their intelligent and dependable wives along on the campaign trail to prove they are capable of managing in the same position? Women are often denied positions they are qualified for; and, if they do get a promotion, their salaries are often less than that of men doing the same job. The discrimination experience by women in the workforce is very damaging to her psyche.

Women are constantly being challenged to prove ourselves. The proverbial glass ceiling still hovers over vast areas of industry. The insinuation that because she is female, a woman is in some way inferior to the male, is a violation on her person. The Women's Liberation movement ushered in an era that saw changes to laws governing sexual harassment and wage discrimination. But there lingers still, the subtle nuances of the old ideologies which existed prior to the 1900s; before sister suffragettes lifted their united voice and marched for change

So, while we acknowledge that there has been great progress in the struggle for women's equality, we must surely too, recognize that greater strides must be taken before women can truly enjoy the same privileges that our male counterparts take for granted.

Responsible World Citizens must stand up with one voice and declare that, "injustice to one woman is injustice to all humanity. If we do not, the result on society will be detrimental. Conversely, if we have a world where women enjoy the same liberties men enjoy; we would have no need for rallies and demonstrations. Until then, we must continue to march. We the Strong; women, men and children; 1, 1000, 100 million, 7 billion strong, we must.

International Women's Day is designated a national holiday in 15 countries. In 2011, the United States designated the month of March, International Women's Month.

**"There is no female mind. The brain is not an organ of sex; Might as well speak of a female liver."**

- Charlotte Perkins Gilman - Writer, economist and lecturer

**"Tremendous amounts of talent are being lost to our society just because that talent wears a skirt."**

- Shirley Chisholm - Politician, educator, the first black woman to serve in the United States Congress

Submitted by – Charmaine Sewell  
Chair, Women's Committee

### The 12th Annual Boonoonoonos Brunch was Superb!

The 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Boonoonoonos Brunch held on Sunday February 13, 2011 at the Jamaican Canadian Association was a resounding success. This premier event for the JCA was hosted by Marcia Brown of Marcia Brown productions and Danae Peart of CHRY 105.5 FM. Both did an outstanding job captivating the audience with humour and taking them through the differences and similarities between islanders.

Retired Deputy Police Chief Keith Forde was recognized for his invaluable contribution to the African Caribbean community during his years of service through the Toronto Police Services. His commitment to issues of equity and race relations, partnership building and change management were immeasurable and praiseworthy. His tribute was met with a standing ovation from the audience and his gratitude was overwhelming as he took the time to pay tribute as well to those who he encountered along his journey.

Among the distinguished guests were Nigel Smith - Consul of Jamaica, Ferdinand Gill - Consul of Barbados and Deputy Chief Peter Sloly.

The night's main entertainment included performances by Naggo Morris and Kaffinal as well as the young and talented Mayse Taylor who wowed the audience with his impersonation of Michael Jackson. The evening's event was topped off with a well planned steel pan performance by Django. The curtain closed on another boonoonoonos brunch one that was well received.

Yolan Williams,

Public Relations Chair

## EVENTS

### CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY

The Annual Children's Christmas Party went very well, this year's event brought out many very talented children from the community including our very own 'Michael Jackson' who was also the winner of the talent contest.

Many thanks to Lead Coordinator Norma Bredwood other committee members, Nadine McLean, Dean Parker, Pansy Stewart, Shirley McKoy, Judith Mitchell, Len Moore, Eulin Lewinson, Pauline Reid-Douglas, Rachelie Alincy, Myrtle Grant, Randy, Glenford Gordon, Enid Gough, Marie Chapman and Janet Samms, Mr. & Mrs. Santa Claus; Gifford and Raphaelita Walker. Thanks to our Donors: Toronto Zenith Contracting Ltd, Ram Equipment Ltd, Amherst Crain Rentals Ltd, Rocky River Construction Limited, The Cowan Foundation and Mrs. Beryl Nugent, Mr. Carl & Norma Morris, Grace's Patty World, No Frills, Ralph Bakery & Take Out, Sunlight Bakery, Maple Lodge Farms Ltd and Michidean's J.A. Patty.

Thanks to our youth and children volunteers: Jaylen Reynolds, Reanna McLean, Katrina Boyd, Shanique Sinclair, Rakewon McLean, Ricardo McLean, Doug Robertson, Miss. Amy Nelson, Zenover Brown, Dr. Sylvanus Thompson, Charmaine Sewell, Leo Campbell and Dwaine Osbourne. Special thanks also to Rakewon who designed the Children's Christmas party flyer.



### NEW YEARS EVE DANCE

With the blessing of the Board, this year's New Years Eve Dance was hosted by Membership Services Committee with the assistance of the Chair of the Volunteer Services Committee. The event, by all accounts, was very successful, a lot of fun and was enjoyed by all our guests. Many of whom expressed that they were very pleased and would be back next year. We also hope to see many more members attending next year's event.

To the Planning Committee and volunteers - thank you for your participation, we could not have done any of this without you. It is my hope that we can continue to work as well together during the year ahead as we did last year. I certainly enjoyed working with all of you. Special thanks to Mr. William & Angie Jenkins for the lovely floral arrangement.

### VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN PROGRAM SUCCESS STORY

"Sophia" a mother of two, landed in Canada fleeing an abusive relationship. "Sophia" was without family or friends and did not know where to turn for support. She was taken to a shelter and given food and clothing. "Sophia" was referred to the JCA for counselling concerning the abuse and the trauma she had suffered at the hands of her partner in her country of origin. Upon meeting with the counsellor at the JCA, it was made evident that "Sophia" was suffering from issues of mental health. She was delusional and struggled to come to terms with her present situation. The counsellor was baffled after realizing that "Sophia's" mental health issues went unnoticed by others. The counsellor immediately went into action, advocating for this client to do a psychological evaluation to decide how she can be helped. Eventually "Sophia" was seen by doctors and diagnosed and given the proper care that she required. She was then able to attend further counselling sessions at the JCA in order to deal with the trauma of the abuse and to find better ways to cope with her present situation.

The Jamaica Canadian Association has an amazing Violence Against Women (VAW) program, which is sponsored by the Ministry of Community and Social Services and the United Way Toronto. It serves women from all walks of life and from all ethnic groups. The VAW program provides counselling and support services to abused women and their children who are victims or witnesses of domestic violence. The program conduct extensive outreach to women who have been victimized and provide counselling and support services in an effort to empower women so that they can overcome the barriers in their personal lives and both reduce violence and to ensure that women who are victims of violence have access to information and access to support, in a safe, confidential and culturally sensitive environment.

The VAW program at JCA is also responsible for developing and delivering educational workshops, providing information and referral to relevant services within the community, advocating on behalf of clients and assisting women to achieve a new awareness about themselves and their lives.

The VAW program continues to advocate for women and their children and welcomes all women who are in need of a safe place to tell their story and to get some help.



Contributed by:  
Charmaine Lane, MS.c., Psych

**WE NEED YOU!**

HOLD THE DATE AND GET READY TO PARTICIPATE!

SUNDAY MAY 1, 2011

**JOIN THE MOVEMENT!**  
How can you help??

1. Put a team together –you could win prizes
2. Walk yourself or designate someone to walk for you and raise pledges
3. Make a donation online. It's easy, go to the JCA website - [jcaontario.org](http://jcaontario.org)
4. Donate prizes
5. Become a Volunteer on May 1\*
6. SPREAD THE WORD

Pledge forms are available from the Jamaican Canadian Association (starting February)

Get in touch with us at 416-746-5772 or Sandra Whiting/Chair | 416 573-1375

**International Women's Day Celebration**

**RECOGNIZING WOMEN**

"Equal access to education:  
Pathway to decent work for women"

SUNDAY, MARCH 6, 2011

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: CAROLYN GOULBOURNE WARREN

HOSTED BY: JCA WOMEN'S COMMITTEE

STARTS: 2 - 4:30 PM

ADV \$20.00 PRIOR TO FEBRUARY 23RD  
\$25.00 AFTER

ENTERTAINMENT|FASHION SHOW  
LIGHT REFRESHMENTS|PROMOTIONAL TABLES.

CONTACT: JCA (416) 746-5772 OR [WWW.JCAONTARIO.ORG](http://www.jcaontario.org)

**JAMAICAN CANADIAN ASSOCIATION**  
995 ARROW ROAD

89GRAPHICS 416-619-5425

## Immigration Group Sessions

Saturday February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2011  
10:00A.M. TO 2:00 P.M.

Topics Include  
Employment, Immigration, Settlement & Adaptation

For information and registration, please contact Nadine Mclean  
@ 416-746-5772 ext 245  
Email to [nmclean@jcaontario.org](mailto:nmclean@jcaontario.org)  
Website: [www.jcaontario.org](http://www.jcaontario.org)  
Refreshments will be served

The Jamaican Canadian Association, 995 Arrow Road, North York, Ontario M9M 2Z5